

SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER APPLICATION PACKAGE

(Application Deadline: 15 July 2011)



Point of Contact: Special Tactics Assessment Director
371st Special Operations Combat Training Squadron
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“First There... That Others May Live”

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Special Tactics Officer Assessment

1. INTRODUCTION.

Thank you for your interest in the Special Tactics officer career field. This demanding career will challenge your leadership, physical, and mental abilities. It offers career opportunities up to Group Command and beyond. This document outlines the application procedures for becoming a Special Tactics officer (STO). As part of a Special Tactics Team, STOs lead and manage some of the most dynamic, talented, and motivated individuals in the Air Force. STOs earn the 13DB Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC). For more information on the career field, you can also visit www.afsoc.af.mil/specialtactics or www.facebook.com/SpecialTacticsOfficer. Applicants familiar with earlier versions of this package should review this document thoroughly because it has undergone significant revision.

The 720th Special Tactics Group (720 STG) is the operational headquarters and functional manager for all Special Tactics personnel. The Group is responsible for hiring Special Tactics Officers, however the assessment and selection process is run by the Air Force Special Operations Training Center (AFSOTC), delegated to the 371st Special Operations Combat Training Squadron. For questions concerning Special Tactics Officer Selection, please use the phone number and/or email address on the cover of this document. The selection and training process is difficult enough, but once an officer qualifies as a STO, the positions of leadership and the demands of follow-on training continue to challenge. There are significant personal risks and sacrifices involved with the mission, and extended periods of duty away from home. The decision to try out should not be made alone, regardless of your personal commitment. Your family must be considered, especially since they often experience anxieties, fears, loneliness, and pressures due to your profession. Those who do adjust find an exciting and rewarding life that they may share with fellow Special Tactics operators and their families. You won't be disappointed!

2. SPECIAL TACTICS MISSION.

Special Tactics Officers (STO) lead Special Tactics (ST) operators in the full spectrum of military operations. Special Tactics Squadrons consist of combat controllers (CCT), pararescuemen (PJs), special operations weathermen (SOWT), and tactical air control specialists (TACP). ST personnel are designated as combat forces assigned to Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). ST personnel plan, prepare, and, when directed, integrate, synchronize, and control the elements of air and space power to execute air missions. Core competencies include assault zone assessment, establishment, and control; combat search and rescue/personnel recovery; battlefield trauma care; terminal attack control (controlling and sequencing fire support air assets for special operations); and tactical weather observations and forecasting. ST forces provide a unique capability and deploy with air, ground, and maritime forces in the execution of Direct Action, Combating Terrorism, Foreign Internal Defense, Unconventional Warfare, Humanitarian Assistance, Coalition Support, Counter-Drug, Combat Search and Rescue, and Special Reconnaissance missions. Operating in all climates, day or night, ST operators maintain the highest standards of physical fitness, and proficiency in the use of light weapons.

3. STO APPLICATION PROCEDURES.

Two STO Assessments are conducted each year. Each cycle has two phases: Phase I and Phase II. In Phase I, a Special Tactics Board reviews and assesses applications submitted by the deadline (the STO application is detailed later in this handout). The top applicants are invited to attend Phase II Selection. Phase II consists of a one-week evaluation conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL, approximately two-and-a-half months following Phase I. Candidates must attend Phase II in TDY status. AFSOTC will normally fund Phase II for candidates.

Upon completion of Phase II evaluated events, the 720 STG Commander makes his selection of new STOs. Applicants will be briefed on their select/non-select status upon completing Phase II. The schedule for the two selection cycles is as follows:

- 15 January Phase I applications due to ST Assessment Director (Phase II likely in April)
- 15 July Phase I applications due to ST Assessment Director (Phase II likely in October)

Receiving an invitation to Phase II means the Phase I Selection Board would like to take a closer look at your potential to become a STO. Your decision to attend is voluntary and non-binding. Being selected at Phase II

means the 720 STG Commander has approved your entry into the career field and pipeline training. It is ultimately up to you to accept the challenge.

ROTC/USAF Academy Cadets: Cadets should submit a Phase I package before they are classified in another AFSC, ideally, at least 12-18 months before forecasted commissioning date. ROTC cadets must have successfully completed Field Training before applying. USAFA Cadets should apply in their Second Class year. Senior cadets are not prohibited from applying; however, these applications will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the Line Officer Accessions Program Manager at AFPC/DPPAO. Most senior cadets will have to obtain a release from AFPC/DPPAO. The ST community cannot help in gaining release from an assigned career field.

Inter-service Transfers: As a cadet in a Sister Service ROTC/Academy, you should follow the normal application procedures for cadets detailed above, with the understanding that you must declare a commission in the Air Force. Officers in other services seeking to apply for STO should reference AFI 36-2004 *Inter-service Transfer of Officer*. You may submit your application to the ST Phase I Selection Board before a service transfer is approved. However, you must include in your application a letter from your commander supporting this transfer, in lieu of non-applicable career field releasability by an AFPC functional manager. Bear in mind that selection at Phase II does not guarantee an approved inter-service transfer; the processes are independent of each other. It is highly recommended that this process be started at least six months in advance due to the time lag involved in the transfer. For additional information, contact the ST Assessment Director.

Officer Training School: Enlisted members who have already been selected for OTS can apply for and/or attend STO Phase I/II; however, you must attend Phase II prior to starting OTS in order to enter the AF with the STO AFSC. This will likely require submission of OTS and Phase I packages concurrently. If selected at Phase II, 720 STG will coordinate with AFPC to ensure that you are awarded the STO AFSC upon graduation from OTS. If you cannot attend Phase II due to an OTS scheduling conflict, or you are a non-invite/non-select at Phase I/II, you will still proceed to OTS, get commissioned, and enter the career field assigned to you by the OTS Board. If you are still interested in STO, you should pursue cross training at the appropriate time in your career.

Personnel may apply for STO prior to submitting an application for OTS; however, you must meet the minimum OTS requirements as outlined by AF Recruiting Service (AFRS). If you are selected for STO through the Phase I/II process, you may then apply for OTS with the intent to enter into the STO AFSC. If you are not selected for STO, you may still apply for OTS, but you will not be eligible for the STO AFSC unless you successfully complete STO Phase II prior to your OTS start date.

Active Duty USAF: As an Air Force officer, you must first obtain release from your AFPC functional manager in order to cross train into 13D. The ST Assessment Director has no authority to interfere with AFPC's manning requirements. If invited to Phase II but ultimately not selected, you return to your previous assignment and career field.

Civilian Personnel: Selection packages from civilian personnel will not be considered until submitted as commissioned officers in the USAF. Once commissioned, these officers will already be classified into a USAF career field. The candidate must then secure a release from that career field to initiate a valid selection package. Any officer not selected at phase II will return to their previous career field and assignment.

First-Time Non-Selects: Candidates who attend Phase II but are not selected are not guaranteed a Phase II invitation in future selection cycles. If the STO cadre identify deficiencies/weaknesses that they would like to see corrected before accepting you into the ST community, you must submit an updated application, beginning with the Phase I paperwork. You may elect to use the same recommendation letters, but all other information should be updated appropriately and you must accomplish a new PAST.

4. **CAREER FIELD ELIGIBILITY.**

Special Tactics Officers require high levels of physical fitness, mental agility, professionalism, leadership, interpersonal skills, initiative, psychological stability, motivation, and technical competency. Additional eligibility criteria are listed below:

- Be a male
- Security clearance: Secret (minimum), Top Secret-attainable
- Retention: Six years (minimum)
- Volunteer for Hazardous Duty: Parachute (Static-line and Freefall) and combat diver (SCUBA) duty

- Background: Outstanding resume and no negative personal history
- Medical/Physical: IFC III Flying Physical (SWIC) as outlined in this package
- Physical Fitness: As a minimum, you must satisfactorily complete the minimum number of PT Evaluation exercise repetitions and run and swim in less than the maximum allowable times to be competitive at Phase I and Phase II, you should perform well above the minimums

5. **PHASE I.**

Phase I applications are due by 15 January or 15 July. The ST Assessment director does an initial review of the applications for completeness and gives them to the Battlefield Airman Clinic for a medical review. The ST Assessment Director convenes a review board consisting of STOs. The board racks and stacks the applications, identifying the candidates most likely to succeed. The board recommends to 720 STG/CC that the top candidates be invited to Phase II.

At that time, the ST Assessment Director contacts the individuals with Phase II invitation/reporting instructions.

The ST Assessment Director designates the candidate team leader; the team is encouraged to begin team building via email and other means. The more cohesive the team is prior to arrival, the better the team interaction will be during Phase II, enhancing everyone's chances to be selected. The team leader is the primary means of contacting the ST Assessment Director for assessment-related matters. The ST Assessment Director is your definitive resource for all policy, continuity, and information on Phase II.

Applications from candidates are stored for Phase II cadre to gain an initial impression of the team members. All non-invited applicants may request feedback on their applications from the ST Assessment Director. If you do not hear from the ST Assessment Director within 45 days of submitting your application, contact him for details.

Phase I Application Procedures: Attention to detail is an endlessly repeated phrase within the ST community. With this in mind, proofread your application thoroughly for accuracy, format, grammar, and spelling. In Phase I, the Selection Board relies solely on information and impressions made through your application. Your success in the ST community begins with this application. Incomplete or poorly crafted applications are a reflection of the applicant's professionalism. As a general rule, successful Phase I applications are concise, easy to understand, and are not filled with extra frills or "fluff." If the ST Assessment Director (the first person to see your application) has trouble with your application's organization (out of order, incomplete data, lacks neatness, etc.), you have already failed to make a good impression.

A sample Phase I package is included. When complete, your application should be scanned into a PDF file, and sent via signed official email (.gov or .mil) to AFSOTC.STO@hurlburt.af.mil. Put your name and "STO Application" in the subject line of the email, such as "John Doe STO Application". Bring the original application to Phase II. For cadets that do not have access to official email, have one of your ROTC leaders send it in for you.

The first page should be a photograph of you (full length, 3/4 oblique view; service dress or sister service equivalent uniform). The second page will be a simple fact sheet that includes the following information: full name and rank, current unit, unit address, commissioning date (month and year) (cadets and enlisted provide projected commissioning date), date of rank (for O-2 and higher), SSAN, phone number and email address, current commander/AOC name, rank, and phone number, and your AFPC functional manager's name, rank, and phone number (cadets may not have a functional manager). The rest of your application shall include (in this order):

- A one-page narrative describing why you want to be a Special Tactics officer and what life experiences and abilities you possess which uniquely qualify you for a position of responsibility and leadership in the Air Force. Make sure you research what a Special Tactics officer really does for a living. You must understand and embrace our role as officers in Special Tactics and the Air Force. Include a short statement on your STO career objectives.
- One-page personal résumé; relevant and to the point.
- Three short, one-page letters of recommendation, one from your commanding officer, and the other two from individuals in contact with you on a routine basis (a previous supervisor, ROTC instructor, or

instructor/professor/coach, as applicable). The letters should comment on your leadership abilities including relevant examples.

- Copies of the four most recent performance or training reports, cadet evaluations, etc. If your time in service is too short to have four reports, include what is available.
- PT evaluation verification letter.
- Your signed statement as a volunteer for hazardous duty.
- A signed statement documenting sister service or AFPC-approved releasability. If you are not releasable from your present career field, do not apply for Special Tactics at this time. We do not have the authority to obtain your release.
- A signed statement documenting the medical facility and date of your most recent Flying Physical. This should include the name and contact information of the Flight Surgeon (or sister service equivalent) that accomplished your examination. Do not include any portion of your medical records or any privileged medical information. The Battlefield Airman Clinic will review your complete record electronically.

6. **PHASE II.**

A quote from the former 720 STG Commander, Brigadier General (ret) Robert Holmes, capturing his Selection philosophy: “I’m going for a run. Don’t ask me how far or how fast. Just be there with me at the end.” This is the Phase II reference point for applying physical stresses on each candidate. Do not underestimate the level of physical and mental effort it will take to be selected during try-outs.

Phase II Selection is conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL. The purpose of Phase II is to assess each candidate in the nine ST attributes: Physical Fitness, Mental Agility, Professionalism, Leadership, Interpersonal Skills, Initiative, Psychological Stability, Motivation, and Technical Competency for the purpose of determining if you have the raw skills to operate in an ST environment. Your performance will be evaluated as a team member and as an individual. The schedule is designed to stress you. The ST cadre will observe and take notes on everything you do. These observations will be the basis for a hiring recommendation. The data will also be used to provide critical feedback to enhance your Air Force growth.

Candidates must be prepared for a physically and mentally demanding week. You cannot trust your judgment of your physical and mental preparedness prior to coming to Phase II. Feedback from most candidates indicates that this week is more demanding than anything they anticipated. The cadre will push you physically and mentally beyond your comfort zone to assess those critical attributes in adverse situations. You will be expected to perform to the best of your ability in all events.

Billeting will be coordinated for all candidates. Candidates will be billeted together for the duration of Phase II. The candidate team leader is responsible for passing travel and contact information for all candidates. The first person to check in will be responsible for facilitating the inprocessing of additional candidates. You will sign for government vehicles for team use. When the candidate team leader arrives, he must check in with the ST Assessment Director for further instructions.

Detailed information on all water work (the most difficult area for most candidates) is included. Equipment items used in each event are listed; Phase II equipment will be issued at Hurlburt Field.

There are four ways to be dismissed during Phase II. Failure to pass the PT Evaluation during Phase II is grounds for immediate dismissal; passing the PT Evaluation on Day 1 only means you can continue with Phase II. Medical DQ results from a medical assessment performed by 720 STG medical personnel, who determine your ability to safely continue Phase II. Self-Initiated Elimination (SIE) means that you no longer wish to continue in the assessment. Additionally, Quitting by Action (QBA) is a Phase II policy that allows the Phase II cadre to give you three consecutive warnings during an assessment event, for demonstrating lack of motivation to continue or perform at the required level of effort. If a fourth warning is issued, you are QBA and subject to removal from the assessment. If a candidate SIE’s or QBA’s, he will not be considered again for assessment.

Phase II assessment events can include: ruck-marching, calisthenics sessions, psychological testing and interviews, briefing and writing evaluations, running, problem solving, field assessment scenarios, and water confidence.

Those candidates who successfully complete Phase II and are selected by 720 STG/CC can expect PCS orders to STTS at Hurlburt Field. PCS timeframe will be coordinated with the losing command via AFPC. The ST Assessment Director will notify your chain of command.

After you PCS to STTS, you will maintain a physical training regimen with the other pipeline officers, and complete various in-house training between pipeline schools. This arrangement is designed to enhance your awareness of Special Tactics missions, maintain your motivation, and foster professional development as a STO. After the AST Training Office schedules your pipeline sequence, you will enter the training pipeline, returning to Hurlburt Field after each school.

7. THE TRAINING PIPELINE.

STOs receive the same initial training as enlisted combat controllers, a process that takes approximately 8-10 months, followed by 12 months of AST. The entire training program includes eight schools. You may have opportunities to take leave during your pipeline training, since the AETC pipeline schools are scheduled and sequenced well in advance. Students travel from school to school as a class, with the ranking student in charge. Officers in the pipeline are expected to not only to excel in all facets of training, but also to ensure the enlisted students in the pipeline succeed. Training consists of the following schools:

Combat Control Orientation Course: 2 weeks, Lackland AFB, TX. The Combat Control Orientation Course introduces CCT candidates to combat controller duties, mission areas, initial weapons qualifications, history, professional development, and team building skills. The CCT Orientation Course will begin preparing students physically for AETC's 9-month training pipeline. This course does not replace the 10-week Indoctrination Course that CCT used to attend with PJ students. CCT no longer attend "Indoc." Pre-Scuba training is accomplished at AST.

Combat Control Operator / Air Traffic Control Officer Course: 15 weeks, Keesler AFB, MS. This course teaches aircraft recognition and performance, air navigation aids, weather, airport traffic control, flight assistance service, communication procedures, conventional approach control, radar procedures, airfield management, terminal instrument procedures, and air traffic rules. This is the same course that all other USAF air traffic control officers attend. In addition to normal classes, daily physical training is conducted to ensure that STO trainees and the enlisted CCT trainees they live with at Keesler are physically ready for the pipeline's upcoming challenges.

US Air Force Basic Combat Survival School: 2 weeks, Fairchild AFB, WA. This course teaches basic survival techniques for remote areas. This includes instruction in principles, procedures, equipment, and techniques that enable individuals to survive, regardless of climatic conditions or unfriendly environments, resist the enemy, and return home.

US Army Basic Airborne School: 3 weeks, Fort Benning, GA. Here you learn the basic parachuting skills required to infiltrate an objective area by static line airdrop. This course includes ground operations week, tower week, and jump week where you make five actual parachute jumps. Personnel who complete this training are awarded the basic parachutist rating and are authorized to wear the basic parachutist badge.

Combat Control School: 13 weeks, Pope AFB, NC. This course provides final CCT 3-level qualifications. Training includes land navigation, communications, assault zones, demolitions, small unit tactics, parachute operations, and field tactics. At the completion of this course, each graduate is awarded the scarlet beret and the CCT apprentice skill level, thus completing the AETC training pipeline.

Advanced Skills Training: After successfully completing Combat Control School, CCT apprentices PCS to the Special Tactics Training Squadron, Hurlburt Field, FL, for a year of follow-on training. The AST approach to training is "warriors training warriors," and is designed to prepare students for dive school and to upgrade apprentices to mission-ready status. From AST, 3-levels will be sent TDY to both dive school and HALO school (detailed below). Enlisted combat controllers will complete all 5-level upgrade training before leaving Hurlburt for their first assignment to a Special Tactics Squadron (STS). Officers will receive the same training as the enlisted 3-levels, as well as additional courses for officer professional development. Mission qualification training will

encompass amphibious infiltration/exfiltration, small arms training, fire support, tactical vehicle operations, assault zone control, communications equipment, surveys, demolitions, reconnaissance, mission planning, and much more.

US Air Force Combat Diver Course: 5 weeks, Naval Support Activity (NSA) Panama City, FL. Here you become a combat diver and learn to use open-circuit and closed-circuit underwater breathing systems to infiltrate areas surrounded by water undetected. This course provides training to depths of 130 ft, stressing development of maximum underwater mobility under various operating conditions.

US Army Military Free Fall Parachutist School: 5 weeks, Ft Bragg, NC, and Yuma Proving Grounds, AZ. This course instructs High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) free fall parachuting using the high performance ram air canopy. The course provides wind tunnel training, in-air instruction focusing on student stability, aerial maneuvers, air sense, parachute opening procedures, emergency procedures, canopy control, and landing in a group. Each student receives a minimum of 25 free fall jumps including 2 day and 2 night jumps with supplemental oxygen, rucksack, weapon, and load-bearing equipment.

Though a rare occurrence, pipeline officers who fail to successfully complete any requirement throughout the pipeline will be eliminated from further qualification training and referred to AFPC for re-classification. Occasionally, students may be washed-back from a class for medical or physical reasons, etc. Students who self-eliminate from any pipeline course will be dropped from the program and referred to AFPC for re-classification.

8. PREPARATION FOR TRAINING.

The physical demands of Phase II Selection and the training pipeline as a whole cannot be overstated. Applicants who can only accomplish the minimum fitness scores are not prepared to attend Phase II. Candidates selected at Phase II not only score well above the minimums for the PT Evaluation, but also have developed the stamina necessary to perform at high levels of effort throughout the week. Well in advance of the assessment, applicants must prepare themselves through a rigorous exercise regimen. A basic plan is included below. Reading the following information should help you effectively prepare for Phase II. The more you prepare, the better your chances for a strong performance at Phase II. Focus on increasing your overall endurance for sustained output by working out two to three separate times per day. Two weeks prior to Phase II start, begin tapering your workouts to arrive at Phase II, rested and strong.

Cardio-respiratory Training: This training develops efficiency in oxygen transfer through activities that increase the heart rate to a certain training level and maintain that level for at least 20 minutes. Running, swimming, and ruck-marching are the things you should work on prior to Phase II.

- Running. You will be required to do extensive running during Phase II. These runs progress rapidly and will vary in distance and intensity. Runs may be as long as 60 minutes. In preparation, you should run 3 - 4 times per week for 30 minutes and longer, at a speed you can maintain without walking or stopping. As a yardstick, a good goal is to be able to run 6 miles in under 40 minutes prior to Phase II.
- Swimming. A candidate may swim 2000 meters or more in a typical session. In preparation, you should swim 1500 - 2000 meters, 3 - 5 times per week. A good goal is to be able to freestyle swim 1500 meters in less than 28 minutes.
- Ruck-marching. Perform with a standard ALICE style rucksack and military style jungle boots with drain holes. Use 40-50 lbs of weight secured as high as possible inside the pack. Ensure that shoulder and hip straps are adjusted properly. Ruck at least once a week for 1-2 hours before coming to Phase II.

Strength and Endurance Training: Special Tactics is, by nature, a career field whose training and mission areas demand above average levels of both strength and endurance. Strength is your ability to exert force. Endurance is your ability to exert this force for a prolonged period of time. Your preparation must be geared toward developing a total body balance of strength and endurance. This is best achieved with calisthenics (or weight training) that target all major muscle groups. Continue your weight-training program. However, revise your workouts to develop strength and endurance (8-12 repetition sets). Calisthenics should supplement your weight training. Also, consider performing plyometrics to strengthen connecting muscles and stabilizers.

- Pull-ups/chin-ups. You should be able to do at least 16 repetitions prior to Phase II.
- Sit-ups. You should be able to perform at least 80 repetitions in two minutes before Phase II.

- Push-ups. You should be able to do 70 repetitions in two minutes before Phase II.

Flexibility: The ability to move all your joints through a full range of motion will give incalculable health benefits to a student in the training pipeline. Warm-up and cool-down periods that include stretching exercises should be incorporated into all workouts to improve flexibility and prevent injury. Key guidelines to remember:

- Always warm-up by doing light activities before stretching.
- Stretches should not involve jerky movements. A stretch should be assumed slowly and held 15 seconds to 2 minutes. The longer you hold a stretch, the better flexibility you will achieve.
- Ensure you stretch following exercise to improve flexibility, since your muscles are warm and pliable.

ANNEX A

SAMPLE PHASE I APPLICATION PACKAGE

20 Oct 99

NAME	2d Lt John A. Doe
ADDRESS	16 th Equipment Maintenance Squadron 10 Independence Rd Hurlburt Field, FL 23544
COMMISSIONING DATE	27 May 98
SSN	xxx-xx-xxxx
CONTACT INFORMATION	DSN 123-4567 John.doe@hurlburt.af.mil
PRESENT AFSC	21A3/Aircraft Maintenance Officer
COMMANDER	Major John B. Doe DSN 123-4567
FUNCTIONAL MANAGER	Major John C. Doe DSN 123-4567
ATTENDED PHASE II? REASON NOT SELECTED	STO / CRO / NOT APPLICABLE (circle one) (short answer)
ATTENDED INDOC? REASON IF NOT SUCCESSFUL	YES / NOT APPLICABLE (circle one) (short answer)

JOHN A. DOE, 2d Lt, USAF
Logistics Training Flight Commander

TABS

1. Narrative
2. Résumé
3. Letters of Recommendation
4. Last Four Performance Reports
5. PT Evaluation Letter
6. Hazardous Duty Statement
7. Releasability Statement
8. Medical Records

Current as of 15 Feb 2011

SAMPLE PHASE I APPLICATION PACKAGE

20 Oct 99

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 16 EMS/MXMG

SUBJECT: Why I want to be a Special Tactics Officer

1. An individual's reasons for joining the armed forces can be as varied as the career fields a service has to offer. My reasons for joining the Air Force, and subsequent plan to serve out a long and honorable career, are simple and have remained constant. I admire the people the Air Force attracts, and find great satisfaction in working with men and women whose pride in accomplishing a mission that transcends individual goals is so readily apparent. I believe I will find the ultimate manifestation of good people and an honorable mission in the Special Tactics career field.
2. As a "military brat," the Air Force has always been my home, and a career in uniform has been a constant goal in my life since my earliest memories. I was raised in an immediate family, by my father and mother to espouse the values of their chosen family, the Air Force. The system of shared experiences and values that make the Air Force more than just another job have formed the foundation of the young officer I've become. In the Special Tactics career field, I see the next evolution of the Air Force family I have grown to admire and emulate. The intense pride shared by a Special Tactics Officer and his team is everything I have ever wanted from a career of service.
3. As a Special Tactics Officer, I know that my first and ultimate responsibility will be for the welfare of the men under my supervision. I know that I have both the mental and physical strength to accomplish any mission and ensure the men I work with in the field will have every opportunity to excel. The frequent moves inherent to growing up in an Air Force family, as well as my recent Maintenance officer experiences, have allowed me to cultivate the kind of people skills and leadership techniques that an effective team leader must possess. My desire to share in the pride of the Special Tactics community has led me to attain the physical prowess necessary to operate successfully in the field. I know that I can be a credit to the Special Tactics career field.
4. My career objectives are to gain operational experience as a team leader after completing the necessary training. Eventually, as a major, I would seek to gain staff experience, which would serve me well in my ultimate goal, to attain command of a Special Tactics Squadron.
5. I believe that I am ready to face the challenges Special Tactics has to offer as a career field. Select me for Special Tactics, and I won't disappoint you.

JOHN A. DOE, 2d Lt, USAF
Logistics Training Flight Commander

SAMPLE PHASE I APPLICATION PACKAGE

PERSONAL RÉSUMÉ

John A. Doe
2d Lt, USAF

SSAN: xxx-xx-xxxx
DOR: 27 May 1998
AFSC: 21A1

16th Equipment Maintenance Squadron
10 Independence Rd.
Hurlburt Field, FL 23544
DSN 123-4567
COM (850) 123-4567

PERSONAL DATA

200 Nice Dr.
Niceville, FL 32578
(850) 123-4567

Age: 23

SERVICE HISTORY

Aug 98 – Present

Logistics Training Flight Commander, 33LSS, Eglin AFB, FL. Leads 15 personnel in five functional elements. Manages all logistics training programs. Ensures dissemination of higher headquarters training directives throughout the wing. Develops monthly training plans and schedules training events for 2,200 wing personnel. Monitors and directs the on-the-job training program for over 1,600 enlisted personnel. Provides monthly status of training briefing for all commanders. Identifies training shortfalls and works resolution through squadron commanders. Serves as Maintenance Officer Orientation Training Program Director. Maintains and controls over \$50M in training assets. Advisor to the Wing Commander on training issues.

June 94 – June 98

Cadet, US Air Force Academy, Distinguished Graduate, 1998. Squadron Commander, Spring 98, supervised the discipline, training, and safety of 104 cadets. Squad Leader, 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, Fall 1997. Supervised 10 Army cadets while representing USAF at the Military Academy. Basic Military Freefall Parachute Course Instructor and Jumpmaster. 4 year Division I intercollegiate wrestler.

EDUCATION

B.S. Military History, USAF Academy, 1998 (GPA 3.2)

CERTIFICATION/AWARDS

Air Assault
Air Force Jumpmaster
Basic Military Freefall Instructor
Professional Skydiver Rating, US Parachute Association

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To become a Special Tactics Officer. To contribute to the United States Air Force mission. To eventually command a Special Tactics Squadron.

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Reading, fitness, military history, cars

SAMPLE PHASE I APPLICATION PACKAGE

25 Oct 99

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 16 EMS/MXMG

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Second Lieutenant John A. Doe, xxx-xx-xxxx

1. I am proud to recommend Lt Doe for a Special Tactics Officer position. John has built a rock-solid reputation in his year and a half with the 16th Equipment Maintenance Squadron. On a daily basis, he demonstrated superb initiative and untiring drive that enables him to do fantastic things for our Air Force. Without a doubt, he is a perfect choice for the Special Tactics career field.

2. As the commander of my Logistics Training Flight, Lt Doe is responsible for scheduling and training the 2,200 personnel who comprise the 16 EMS, a difficult managerial task he has long since mastered. Working directly with six squadron commanders, as well as regularly briefing the wing commander, John has honed his speaking and "people" skills to a fine edge, displaying a poise and confidence that belie his years. John's responsibilities range from maintaining over 50 million dollars in training equipment to spearheading the wing's cargo processing function during our all too frequent deployments. John has risen to every challenge we have put before him, and passed all with flying colors.

3. While his job with the Training Flight occupied much of his time, what continues to amaze me is John's unflagging leadership and energy. In his short time here at Hurlburt, he has become a voice within the wing that peers and subordinates listen to. He follows up his words with actions that remind us all that we are a military unit and should be ready with no-notice to perform our mission. John is truly a leader in every sense of the word.

4. To be blunt, Lt Doe succeeds magnificently at everything he undertakes. He is a sincere, articulate young man who is made of just the right decisive "stuff" we're looking for in our young officers. I am confident he would make an excellent combat controller, and recommend his selection on your next board.

JOHN B. DOE, Lt Col, USAF
Commander

NOTE: This is an example -- a complete package requires three letters of recommendation.

NOTE: Attach copies of your most recent performance reports and PT Evaluation Letter.

SAMPLE PHASE I APPLICATION PACKAGE

22 Oct 99

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 16 EMS/MXMG

SUBJECT: Volunteer for Hazardous Duty

I, Second Lieutenant John A. Doe, volunteer for hazardous duty including parachuting, SCUBA diving, demolitions, high risk training and contingency operations.

JOHN A. DOE, 2d Lt, USAF
Logistics Training Flight Commander

Current as of 15 Feb 2011

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“First There . . . That Others May Live”

SAMPLE PHASE I APPLICATION PACKAGE

22 Oct 99

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 16 EMS/MXMG

SUBJECT: Release from Current AFSC

Maj John C. Doe, DSN 123-4567, my resource manager from AFPC, agrees to release me from my current AFSC 21A, Aircraft Maintenance, if selected for Special Tactics AFSC 13DXB.

JOHN A. DOE, 2d Lt, USAF
Logistics Training Flight Commander

JOHN C. DOE, Maj, USAF
21A1 Functional Manager

Current as of 15 Feb 2011

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“First There . . . That Others May Live”

SAMPLE PHASE I APPLICATION PACKAGE

22 Oct 99

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 16 EMS/MXMG

SUBJECT: IFC III Flying Physical

I accomplished an IFC III Flying Physical at the Eglin Air Force Base Hospital on (Date). The Flight Surgeon that administered my physical is Capt John C. Doe. He can be contacted at (Phone Number) and (email).

JOHN A. DOE, 2d Lt, USAF
Logistics Training Flight Commander

NOTE: Applicants must possess a valid, current (within 2 years of application date) IFC III CCT/PJ/STO Physical (also called SWIC or Special Warfare Initial Certification Physical). Packages will be considered with IFC III physical pending waiver or AETC Certification provided it has been submitted by host base in PEPP system. Note, if host base Force Health/Flight Medicine is unfamiliar with SWIC physical procedures then contact Hurlburt Field Battlefield Airman Clinic at DSN 579-3702 (Comm: 850-884-3702) for assistance.

Current as of 15 Feb 2011

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“First There . . . That Others May Live”

ANNEX B

STO PT EVALUATION STANDARDS

General. Officer and cadet Special Tactics applicants shall complete the Physical Training Evaluation in accordance with these procedures as part of the Special Tactics officer application. This test is based on the Special Tactics operator physical training standards/evaluation test described in AFI 13-219, *Special Tactics Operator Standards and Evaluation Program*, Chapter 3. The added underwater swim portion of the PT Evaluation and the swim without fins is a modification for ST Officer Selection purposes only.

Standards. You must complete the minimum number of exercises, and run and swim within the times specified below. STO selection is extremely competitive; you should give your very best effort, which should be well beyond the minimums. When you submit your application, your PT Eval should have been accomplished within three months of the Phase I due date, and as close to Phase I as possible to reflect your highest level of fitness to date.

CALISTHENICS: chin-ups or pull-ups, sit-ups, push-ups -- exercise for full time limit or until muscle failure

- Minimums:
 - 12 chin/pull-ups in 1 minute
 - 75 sit-ups in 2 minutes
 - 64 push-ups in 2 minutes

RUN: 3 miles non-stop

- Minimums:
 - 3 miles completed within 22:00 minutes

UNDERWATER SWIM: swim and remain underwater for 25 meters

- Minimums:
 - Successful completion

SWIM: 1500 meters non-stop -- any stroke except backstroke (no fins)

- Minimums:
 - 1500 m completed within 32 minutes

Administration. The PT Eval must be administered in the order listed and completed within a three-hour timeframe. If you are unable to meet any of the minimums, you have failed the test, and the test will end at that point. Due to the importance placed on exercise form, both at Phase II and in the pipeline, the PT Eval should be administered by a Special Tactics Officer, pararescueman, or combat controller, in order to prepare you for the standards at which you'll be expected to perform. If you fail to execute the proper form, the test administrator will correct you, and the incorrect repetition will not be counted. Other test administrators (active duty officers, USAFA/ROTC instructors, former special operators, etc.) will be acceptable on a case-by-case basis, following coordination with the STO project officer. The unit administering the test will document the results (example format attached to this Annex). After completing the PT Eval to the best of your ability, complete the PT Eval Certification Letter, sign it, and have it attested to by the administrator. Include the letter in your application.

Procedures. Calisthenics events will be tested one right after the other with approximately a 2-minute time lapse between events. Upon completion of all the calisthenics events, a 10-minute rest period is given prior to starting the 3-mile run. Upon completion of the 3-mile run, a 30-minute rest period is given prior to starting the 1500 meter swim. Ten minutes prior to starting the 1500 meter swim (i.e. 20 minutes following the completion of the run), the individual will complete the underwater swim.

- **Chin/Pull-ups (one minute time limit).** This exercise is executed on a pull-up bar. The individual grasps the bar with the hands about shoulder width apart. Hands can be facing toward the candidate (chin up) or away from the candidate (pull up). This is a two-count exercise. The exercise begins in the "dead hang"

position. Count one: pull the body directly upward until the chin is over the bar. Count two: lower the body until the body is again in the “dead hang” position. Repeat as many times as possible. Individuals will not swing excessively or bicycle feet as the chin is pulled over the bar. Legs are allowed to bend, but must not be kicked or manipulated to aid upward movement. If the candidate falls off or releases the bar, the exercise is terminated. Designed to measure strength and endurance in the back, triceps, and biceps muscles used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.

- **Sit-ups (two minute time limit).** Starting position: back flat on the ground, hands behind the head, fingers interlocked, head off the ground and knees bent at approximately a 90 degree angle. Another individual during the exercise holds the feet (optional). This is a two-count exercise. Count one: sit up until the back is vertical, breaking a 90 degree plane with the ground. Count two: return to the starting position. There is no authorized rest position during this exercise. If the candidate rests, the exercise is terminated. If an individual raises buttocks from ground, removes hands from behind the head during a repetition, or the fingers are not interlocked, the repetition is not counted. Designed to measure strength and endurance in abdominal and hip flexor muscle groups used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.
- **Push-ups (two minute time limit).** This exercise starts from the front leaning rest position. The body must be maintained straight from head to heels with knees together. This is a two-count exercise. Count one: flex the elbows, lowering the body until the arm is bent at least 90 degrees at the elbow and the upper arm breaks a parallel plane with the ground. Count two: raise the body until the elbows are straight and locked. Repeat this exercise as many times as possible. The candidate will not raise his buttocks in the air, sag his middle to the ground, or raise any hand or foot from their starting position. If a hand or foot is raised, the exercise is terminated. The only authorized rest position is the starting position. Designed to measure the strength and endurance of the chest and triceps muscles used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.
- **Three Mile Run.** Performed with running shoes and running shorts. This run must be continuous (non-stop). If a candidate stops anytime during the run, the test will be stopped and considered a failure for the entire test. The test should be conducted on a measured running track. Designed to measure aerobic endurance used when performing mission tasks, specifically employment or evasion situations. This event is followed by a 20-minute rest period prior to the underwater swim.
- **Underwater Swim.** The 25-meter underwater swim should be demonstrated first either through actual demonstration or by use of training video already supplied to recruiting squadrons. If candidates surface or break the water surface during any portion of the swim, the test will be stopped and considered a failure for the entire test. Swimsuits and swim goggles are the only equipment items allowed. Allow a 10-minute rest period prior to the 1500 meter swim. Candidates should carefully stretch for the swim during this break time.
- **1500 Meter Swim.** The swim will be performed with swim trunks and mask or goggles, in a lap pool. This swim must be continuous (non-stop). If you stop anytime during the swim, the test will be stopped and considered a failure for the entire test. Designed to measure aerobic endurance in a maritime environment.

SAMPLE PT EVALUATION CERTIFICATION LETTER

(DATE)

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS SELECTION BOARD

FROM: (Administrator's office symbol)

SUBJECT: PT Evaluation Certification Letter -- STO Selection Application

I certify that (Applicant) was administered the PT Evaluation on (Date). He performed the following repetitions/exercises/elapsed times as indicated below.

EXERCISE

REPETITIONS / ELAPSED TIME

1. CHIN/PULL-UPS (one minute)

_____ repetitions

followed by 2 min rest

2. SIT-UPS (two minutes)

_____ repetitions

followed by 2 min rest

3. PUSH-UPS (two minutes)

_____ repetitions

followed by 10 min rest

4. 3-MILE RUN

_____ minutes: seconds

followed by 20 min rest

5. 25 METER UNDERWATER SWIM

PASS / FAIL (circle one)

followed by 10 minute rest

5. 1500 METER SURFACE SWIM (no fins)

_____ minutes: seconds

APPLICANT SIGNATURE BLOCK

ADMINISTRATOR SIGNATURE BLOCK
CONTACT INFO: phone, email

ANNEX C

PHASE II POOL EVENTS

UNDERWATER SWIMMING. Underwater swimming is a common exercise used to gain confidence in the underwater environment and build breath-holding capacity. The water confidence tasks you will perform at Phase II will require you to swim significant distances underwater. The more efficient you become at underwater swimming, the more confident and capable you will become in completing our evaluated tasks and the SCUBA demands of our specialty. Underwater swimming is basically a modification of the breaststroke, with a longer arm pull to the rear of the body to increase thrust.

Underwaters.

- Equipment: Dive mask will be worn.
- Procedure: The exercise begins with the candidates lined up at one end of the pool. The instructor will initiate the start of the exercise. On the command “Go,” the candidates will push off the wall vigorously and swim underwater from one end of the pool to the other (25 meters) without surfacing. Upon touching the opposite wall they will sprint freestyle back to the starting point. Upon return, they will be allowed to rest the remainder of the specified repeat time interval. The exercise is repeated on the command “Go” until the candidates have completed the required number of underwaters. To satisfactorily complete this exercise, you must leave the wall immediately on command and remain underwater until reaching the opposite wall. You must also sprint back to the starting point. You will be given one warning for unsatisfactory performance and on the next occurrence will be scored unsatisfactory for the exercise.

WATER CONFIDENCE TRAINING. The intent of these exercises is to gauge your confidence in the water and your ability to react calmly and rationally in high stress situations. The following pool events will be evaluated during Phase II. NOTE: the following water confidence exercise descriptions are included for your information only! Do not attempt to do these exercises unless you have a lifeguard standing by for safety. Doing these events may lead to “shallow water blackout.” If this condition occurs, a lifeguard must be immediately available to prevent brain damage or death.

Mask and Snorkel Recovery.

- Equipment: Mask, snorkel, T-shirt.
- Procedure: The mask and snorkel exercise begins with all candidates at one end of the pool. The instructor will then throw or place the candidate’s mask and snorkel a specified distance from the student. This exercise is accomplished one or two candidates at a time. On the command “Go,” you will leave the surface of the pool and swim underwater to the location of your mask and snorkel. Upon reaching them, you will place the snorkel between your knees and position the mask on your face. Once positioned, clear the mask of water, retaining a small amount of air. You will then make a controlled ascent to the surface with the snorkel in your mouth and left arm extended above your head with a clenched fist. Once on the surface, clear the snorkel and give the “OK” hand signal to the evaluating instructor. You will ensure you are facing the instructor, and immediately demonstrate that your mask and snorkel are clear by looking up at the instructor and breathing through the snorkel. A small amount of water in the mask is permissible as long as it does not exceed the top of the nose indents. While on the surface, you will not break the mask or snorkel seal until the exercise has been graded and you are permitted to do so by the instructor. Touching the mask to remove water or remove a twisted strap once you have reached the surface is an automatic failure (integrity violation). This exercise will be scored unsatisfactory if you surface prior to clearing the mask, or you fail to satisfactorily perform in any of the above listed areas.
 - Mask. Clearing the water from a flooded mask involves replacing the water with expelled air. The air, being lighter than the water, will force the water out of the lower portion of the mask as long as the upper portion is held to the forehead by light hand pressure to prevent the venting of air at the top. The amount of hand pressure and the position of the hand will vary, depending on the mask and individual technique.

- Snorkel. To clear the water from a flooded snorkel while on the surface, exhale or puff through the snorkel. The column of air will displace the water and expel it from the snorkel. You may also tilt your head back when on the surface and gravity will clear the snorkel for you.

Buddy Breathing/Pool Harassment.

- Equipment: Dive mask, one snorkel per two-man team, T-shirt.
- Procedure: This exercise is conducted in the deep end of the pool. Candidates enter the water when directed by the instructor. Candidates will be divided into pairs. On the command “Start,” candidates will place their faces into the water and begin to survival float while “buddy-breathing” from one snorkel. During the exercise period, you will maintain control of each other with one hand. With the other hand, you will maintain positive control of the snorkel, and pass it between each other. You should try to consider your buddy’s limited air supply and take only one breath before passing the snorkel back. During this exercise, the candidates will breath only through the snorkel. At no time will you remove your heads from the water and breath from the surface. The exercise period ends on the command “Time.” To satisfactorily complete this exercise, you must keep your face in the water during the entire exercise period. You must remain calm and maintain control of yourself, your buddy, and the snorkel. You will be given one warning for unsatisfactory performance; on the next occurrence, you will be scored unsatisfactory for the exercise. Pool harassment is added as a more intense form of buddy breathing. It involves additional instructors entering the water and providing the candidates with certain stressful situations to see if a student will panic. The same standards apply to this exercise. During pool harassment, the instructor may try to:
 - Take the snorkel (candidates should maintain positive control of the snorkel).
 - Remove the facemask.
 - Attempt to separate partners (candidates should not let go of each other).
 - Cut off your air supply for one or two breaths.
 - Splash water.
 - Push candidates below the pool’s surface.
 - Other maneuvers at instructor’s discretion.

Drownproofing.

- Equipment: Mask, Velcro hand/leg cuffs.
- Procedure: Drownproofing is accomplished in four steps. Candidates will be divided into pairs. The exercise begins with your hands and feet bound while standing on the deck at the deep end of the pool. The instructor will walk by and tap you into the water. You will enter the water and start to bob.
 - Step 1: Bobbing. Begin bobbing by sinking to the bottom of the pool. Upon reaching the bottom, bend your knees and push off the bottom, exhaling until you reach the surface. When your head reaches the surface, inhale one breath and begin the float to the bottom; do not try to stay on the surface.
 - Step 2: Floating. Floating is accomplished by inhaling as much air as possible into your lungs. Tuck your chin into your chest, bend forward at the waist and relax, staying within a 4x4 meter square. When you need air, tilt your head out of the water, breathe, and then go back to the floating position. You will not touch the bottom or sides of the pool.
 - Step 3: Traveling. Dolphin kick 100 meters without touching the bottom or sides of the pool. The dolphin kick is accomplished on your stomach, body bent at the waist and your head moving up and down in the water.
 - Step 4: Flips and Mask Recovery. Once the travel is complete, resume bobbing. Within five bobs, you will perform a front flip underwater. Within another five bobs, you will perform a backward flip underwater. Once both flips are complete, your mask is thrown to the bottom of the pool. Go to the bottom, pick up the mask with your teeth, and complete five bobs while clenching the mask with your teeth.
 - After all tasks are completed, the instructor will yell “Time.” To successfully complete this exercise, you must accomplish all of the above tasks in sequence and without panicking. If unable to do so, you will be scored unsatisfactory for the exercise.

Treading Water.

- Equipment: T-shirt.

- Procedure: The exercise begins with the candidates moving from waist deep water into deep water. On the command “Hands Up,” raise your hands out of the water and tread using only your legs. Correct form for the exercise requires your hands and head to stay above the water for the specified time interval. The hands should be out of the water to the wrist level at a minimum, and the ear lobes should be out of the water and remain dry. The kicking motion is the key to successful completion of the exercise. The motion with your legs should be in an eggbeater fashion, with your feet tracing clockwise and counter-clockwise circles beneath you. The motion of your legs must also be rhythmical and forceful enough to maintain positive buoyancy.

ANNEX D

MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

STO Phase II is physically and mentally challenging and will require your maximum effort. You must arrive to Phase II physically and mentally prepared. You must also take responsibility for your health during the course. We have developed some recommendations that will help you prepare for Phase II and perform at peak efficiency.

You must arrive at Phase II prepared for exercise in a hot, humid, or cold environment. Heat stroke is a serious emergency. The hallmark of heat stroke is altered mental status in the setting of high heat and exertion. Not all victims of heat stroke are “hot and dry”. It is possible to have heat stroke and still be sweating.

You must stay well hydrated at all times during phase II. Dehydration is an insidious process, especially in these environmental conditions. You must get into the habit of drinking often: You must force yourself to drink, even though you do not feel thirsty. Symptoms of early dehydration include headache, irritability, and weakness. If you allow it to continue, nausea, vomiting, dizziness and exhaustion will follow. You must drink 1 to 1 ½ liters of water per hour during periods of heavy exertion and/or high heat and humidity. In order to stay hydrated you must drink relatively small amounts frequently rather than taking a water break and trying to pound a liter or two of water in five minutes. An “on-the-go” hydration system (like *Camelbak* or others) is recommended. You must continue to drink fluids during your off-duty time because you will be in fluid deficit at the end of each training day. You will not be permitted to consume any soft drinks, alcohol, or caffeine during Phase II. These items are diuretic and will cause you to lose more fluid through urination than you are taking in orally. If you are properly hydrated, you will need to urinate every hour. Your urine should be either clear or very light yellow. Dark yellow urine can be an indication of dehydration. Use of sports drinks can help replace electrolytes lost from sweating. However, most commercial sports drinks (*Gatorade* and others) have too much carbohydrate (sugar) in them for efficient absorption. If you use sports drinks, dilute them to half-strength with water. This will reduce the chance of nausea and diarrhea. Sports beverage powder will be provided at Phase II.

You will burn quite a few calories during Phase II. You must eat to maintain your energy in order to meet the physical challenges presented to you. Your only food source will be MREs, provided to you on the first day. Successful candidates eat small amounts frequently, rather than lots of food at once. When you eat will be up to you- you must judge your own nutritional needs. Nutritional supplements, such as protein powders, protein drinks, and amino acid supplements are not a good idea and are not allowed during assessment. Most of them put a heavy metabolic load on your kidneys, and do not do much to help build muscle. The human body is capable of absorbing and utilizing a maximum of 0.6-0.8 grams of protein per pound of body weight per day. For an average 175-pound male, that comes to 140 grams (about 5 ounces) of protein per day. Herbal supplements, diet aids, or “ergogenic” aids should not be used. Most such “ergogenic” aids are either ineffective, or contain medications that can be harmful. Many “herbal ergogenic” supplements contain high levels of ephedrine and caffeine which have been linked to heat intolerance, kidney and liver damage. Any personnel on flying status must gain the approval of a flight surgeon to take such supplements.

If you attend Phase II, you will be given an in-depth brief on additional medical considerations specific to our assessment. Medical personnel are present at every event, and a Flight Surgeon is available 24 hours per day.